

FILMSTRIPS

Courtesy: **Consolidated Film Industries**
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*Reprinted from INTERNATIONAL PHOTOGRAPHER
The Magazine Of Motion Picture Arts And Sciences*

F I L M S T R I P S

*A Message
Communicator*

WHAT IS a Filmstrip? That is probably the first question a great many people would ask.

Filmstrips are the unique answer to the requirements of salesmen, educators, religious groups, fraternal organizations, convention or business-meeting point makers, or people who simply wish to entertain other people. The word unique can be applied to this medium, because in no other way can a producer have his message on film, in color, and with sound at a fraction of the cost of producing a moving picture of quality.

To pursue the question of what is a filmstrip further . . . it is in 35mm . . . it is ordinarily in color, motion picture release print quality color . . . and there is either a record or tape which provides oral commentary, musical bridges or background, sound effects or whatever is required to effect a complete entertainment.

Film-makers think in terms of scenes. Filmstrip makers are concerned with individual frames. Since strips are projected frame by frame, each frame becomes important just as scenes are important to the motion picture. And, frames are used in the same manner. Sometimes they are on the screen for as little as 1/20th of a second as a buildup to a frame which may last 3 to 15 seconds. This longer-lasting frame makes the point, even as scenes in a picture or play are arranged to make a point, and if the preceding frames have been skillfully arranged, the viewer is entertained and has also been exposed to the purpose of the strip.

Although a filmstrip doesn't actually move like a motion picture, isn't something lost in this lack of motion? Not at all. Studies have shown that it takes 3 to 7

seconds for an image to be permanently implanted in the human mind. This is right up Filmstrip Alley. The exact image desired is placed on the screen and held for the time required to register same on the observers conscious and unconscious.

Salesman like filmstrips because of their mobility. A plastic strip container can be carried in a shirt pocket and a filmstrip projector can be carried by a child. It's easy to place the projector in the front seat of a car, drive to the next customer, carry the projector in as a portable type-writer would be carried, and let the strip do the talking.

Because, like Confucius has said, a picture is worth ten thousand words . . . and, if it's an entertaining strip, and the customer is willing to look, chances for making a sale are excellent.

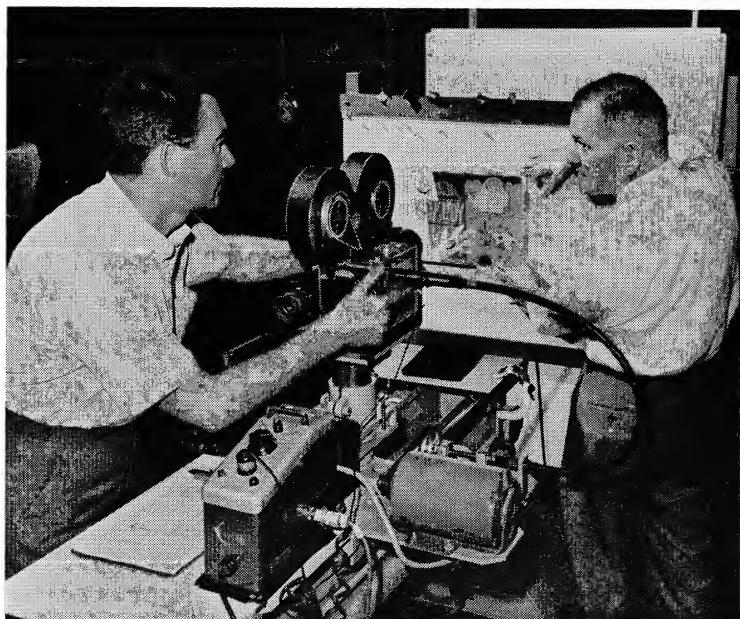
So, these frame by frame films are a salesman's friend.

So, too, are they the educator's friend. And for the same reasons. The desired message is conveyed, the projector is comparatively inexpensive, no mechanical adeptness is required in threading, and existing libraries of filmstrips are readily available to teachers merely for the asking on a vast variety of subjects.

Church groups find that they can afford to make this type of film whereas 8mm or 16mm pictures would be financially impossible.

Possibly, you wonder if they are entertaining enough . . . are they really worth making except as a hard-sell sales tool. A good filmstrip writer injects the same creativity into a strip as a scenario writer does into a film treatment. The photographers and artists strive for the same perfection

Lining up a filmstrip art shot are CFI cameramen, Lou Livingston and Bill Brown. This scene is indicative of the care and skill employed in the photography of filmstrips.



and impact as do cinematographers and scenic and title artists.

Naturally, these efforts are met with varying results just as there are in motion pictures. But, at least, the capacity to educate, entertain, and sell is inherent in the medium.

We have seen what filmstrips are, and what they do and why, but what of the components. Movie companies go on location or a set to shoot their negative. Filmstrips are shot on location in the medium of color transparencies, ranging in size from 35's to 4x5's. Often, a particular point is best made through the use of an artist's brush or pen. These two approaches to the final negative are freely intermingled throughout to the best advantage of the strip and the use of which is determined by the theme or point being conveyed.

The final negative mentioned is referred to as a Master negative, or Master. To produce this print-making master, requires the photography, in order of the assorted transparencies and art work. Again, there is a similarity between filmstrip procedures and color movie making. As are scenes in the movie, individual frames are timed and balanced, one against the other, for a pleasing over-all balance, and exposure tests are made. From these tests are derived the final exposures and color - corrections for each frame is made to insure a pleasing transition from frame to frame and an over-all color balance that will not offend the eye. The color correcting and exposure balance is possibly the most important work done in preparing a master negative. After these tasks have been completed, the preparation of the master is begun.

If the duplicating camera used permits frame registration and has a frame counter

such as ours at Consolidated Film Industries, the transparencies and material requiring back-lighting can be shot first, then, after backing-up the opaque art work can be placed in the proper frames that were left blank while filling in the transparencies. If the camera is not equipped with a counter and thus makes backing-up impossible, all frames must be photographed in sequence, thus necessitating many camera set-ups.

From this negative an answer print is made for the producer's approval, again paralleling film making. After the answer print has been approved, the required number of release prints are made, generally on a loop-type contact printer. In first-rate preparation of filmstrip masters and printing, Eastman color negative and Eastman color release print stocks are used. And, at Consolidated Film Industries, the same care and control are exercised in the manufacture of filmstrip prints as are devoted to motion picture prints.

Length of strips range from 30 frames to 230 frames and have a running time of a few minutes to half an hour. To accentuate certain ideas, split-screen or montage frames and superimpositions are used.

Split-screens are made in several different ways, such as the 2-way, in which an equal division of the frame is made either, vertically, horizontally or diagonally, and thus two pictures are used to illustrate a before and after effect or to graphically make a direct comparison between the two scenes. A 4-way split is generally an even division of two different scenes upper left and upper right and two more scenes lower left and lower right and the use is for even more emphasis than a 2-way split. Three-

way splits are generally three parallel panels, however they can be split with one horizontal scene covering half of the frame and the other two scenes quartering the frame. A montage is an arranged, irregular pattern of scenes and is used for the same purpose as in a moving picture. Superimpositions can be placed in any position on the frame, are generally one or two lines of copy and serve to accent the sound track.

To attain special impact on a scene, a move in can be made on a certain area of a transparency or piece of art, then in the following frame, pan over to another area of the same source of material, and this can be done several times to highlight specific portions of a picture while eliminating the remainder. When preceded or followed by a full-shot, a dramatic effect has been attained, and thus filmstrips even invade the special effects field.

These frame by frame images that are automatically advanced by a built-in signal on either the record or tape, have advanced in both quality and numbers to the point where they are in the upper echelon of the vastly expanding audio-visual field. That is why Consolidated Film Industries in Hollywood has found it advantageous to be among the top manufacturers of quality filmstrips and to pioneer in new facets of the everchanging field.

With much research into the types of lighting and in the selection of films to use, this department is able to reproduce practically any form of presentation into a quality filmstrip. In the process of attaining only the best in a finished product, our technicians have acquired a wealth of experience in giving the customer all the necessary aid in conveying the idea for which the strip is intended.

On newly installed animation equipment, constructed by Oxberry, Jack Thomson, CFI cameraman, checks art work for filmstrip layout.



In a typical scene is Wendell J. Bradbury, Filmstrip Producer, checking continuity on a completed strip with Lou Livingston, CFI cameraman.



